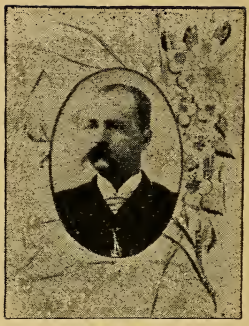
THRICE WORDS

OR RHYMES OR REASONS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.
PS3505
Chap. ..... Copyright No. .....
Shelf. .O542T5
1894
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



J. W. Conway

Polonius What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet. Words, words, words!

THRICE WORDS

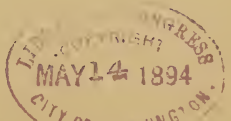
OR RHYMES OR REASONS

BY

JOHN WILLIAM CONWAY

"Men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all."
—GOETHE.

KANSAS
THE NORTON CHAMPION
1894



72462

PS3505
.0542 T5
1894

Copyright, 1894, by
J. W. CONWAY.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE author has expended considerable patience and money in carrying and concealing a hundred or more poems in his trunk for the last twenty years. He takes this opportunity to air a few, employing his own idle press and type for the purpose.

CONTENTS:

This Book	1
Invocation	3
Fishy.	7
Rose and Moss	8
Metempsychosis	10
Sonnet	13
Battle Flags	14
Two Mottoes	16
The Lost Prayer	18
Cassandra	20
Experiments	23
Toute a Toi	24
A Smiling Judge	26
To Father	28
Sir Butterfly	33
To Elder B	34
Centennial Hopes	38
Æsop's Hare	41
Sweet Life	43
Sub Rosa	44
Traitors	46
Venus sans Adonis	48
Honesty Non Est	54
A Christmas Gift	56
Echo	65

M. Estelle G. 66
On a Painting 68
Guinevere's Lament 70
Star of the East 75
Dying the Rose 77
Chicago 81
June 82
The Poesy of a Ring . . . 84
A Fellow Traveler 88
Pathology of Tears . . . 92
Court of Honor 98
An Arizona Tomb 99
A Cynic's Tale 115
Cards—Whist 122
The Joker 123
Fortunes 123
Edith 138
The Red, Red West . . . 140
Inez' Song 141
Sonnets—Cliff Dweller . . 142
Prof. Wynn 143
Post Mortem . . . 144
The Sonnet 145
The Suicide . . . 145
The Poet 147
Truth 148
Sea Foam, a fragment . . . 149

"Say much where little should be said,
Lay on thy censure dextrously."

—*Andrew Lang.*

THIS BOOK is like a grave where dreams
Sleep in repose allied to death
Which intimates another life; it seems
The tomb of thoughts, whims, heroes, themes,—
Will they live after? Fancy's breath
Dilates the nostrils of their clay
And hope looks to the judgment day
When critics pointing to the right or
Left, damns with faint praise me, the writer.

INVOCATION.

(WITH APOLOGIES.)

"A poet born" has not been proudly written
In burnished letters on my natal star,
Nor by the wan Nine madly am I smitten
To rave in verse as real poets are.

No lover who unbosoms shafts of Cupid
Shot in the dark, aimed blindly at the neck,
Am I; than be arraigned such blooming dupe I'd
With horns or cap and bells my skull bedeck.

No poet but a Kansan—for my health:
The prairies swarm with invalids who feel ease
In every robust enterprise for wealth,
All patriots—and fighters like Achilles.

No madman either; tho' daft luneling seems
The modern rhymer who dares publish verses
To tell like spookish dame his nightly dreams,
Or day dreams for that matter, which far worse is.

To one who outlined finished character,
As Euclid figures, with few lines to fetter a
Conception to full vision, I refer
In poet, madman, lover one, etc.

Were I implored to waste an invocation
On certain muses famous in the Greek,
I should obeying lose a rare occasion
To glorify a theory more unique.

This specimen may not be so adroit
As to evade bards who scale Hellas lamely;
It may lack Attic salt, be fresh, be raw; 't
Is legalized in words and symbols, namely:

Hail, Kansas, Muse of Advertising, hail!
Inspire your bard to measure rhythmic feet
Of rhyme smooth as your zephyr, or if stale
The phrase, terrific as your cyclone be 't.

Hail, Kansas, puffed-up Muse the Tenth, as I'm
Informed! Beyond Parnassus you must elbow
Your starward course, o'er difficulties climb,
Drouths, grasshoppers, detractors who to hell go.

Hail, Kansas! or if weary hailing, storm!
Storm every adverse critic in his castle,
Which, shake from moat to barbacan, alarm
Sarcastic wits with your wild razzle dazzle.

Rant, hail, fume, storm, my fickle Kansas Muse,
But after come all calm!—
(Aside) Dank Lethe's waters
Dividing fire from ice can not produce
Forgetful contraries to equal aught hers.

Pure air, bright skies enamoured are of Kansas:
While similies impoverish marbled Italy—
Pink, wrinkled, painted Italy! No man says
It rivals Kansas' clime not knowing it a lie.

Smile, sunny Kansas! that an inspiration
Is in itself and of its own accord;
Your sunbath adds new life, is re-creation,
Puts burning eloquence in heart and word.

With such a State (and, printer, emphasize
Initial S) with such a muse here hinted,
Touch pen, touch paper! gained is laurel prize
While liquid poetry flows on unstinted.

So, Kansas, kindly muse, return some favor
To one who sweat, froze, starved for you—and lied;
While neither has indulged the best behavior,
Puff lavishly—the critics I'll deride.

FISHY.

FISHERMAN. Rolf, what fish did swallow Jonah?
ROLF. A whale.

—*Harold.*

A LITTLE learning hath been called a thing
Of danger; here the error in cetology
Amazes scientists in this wild fling
At rabble ignorance whose voice is free
To slander thus our mammal of the sea.
Who is the Jonah? Rolf, unless you wish
To blight the laureled Tennyson, tho' he
In earnest or in sarcasm serve this dish
Of blubbered paradox: The whale is not a fish.

ROSE AND MOSS.

A LUMP of moss found by a charming child
In her romancing in the woodland wild,
And cherished as a dollhouse ornament—
A forest full of bears—so cast around
Magnificent aroma, sweetest scent,
Delicious perfume and exhalements mild,
That all inquired where the moss was found.

And in her wondrous meaning, childly wise,
With clapping hands, and wide dilating eyes,
The little maiden answered: "Don't you know?
This moss so long beneath rose leaves entombed—
A petal shedding rose did o'er it grow
For years and years where yonder woodland sighs—
That thus the moss was by the rose perfumed."

If we more closely nestled to the flowers
Of thought shed by the mind in summer hours,
The sweets of years would so perfume our lives
That such aroma cast in full completeness
Would fill earth's chambers, as the bees their hives,
With honey-words, good deeds our neighbors' dowers
Till all about us moss-like caught the sweetness.

METEMPSYCHOSIS.

IN the beginning simple Truth was naked,
And Charity in gorgeous mantle clad;
But when they came their worldy trips to make, it
Transpired that both gave up their ancient fad.

The wealth of human frailties grew so shocking
That Charity to cover all her care,
First cast her cloak, chemise, next gown and stocking
Until the modest creature wandered—bare.

Now Charity has not a patch of linen
To cover half the follies of mankind;
Thus stands exposed the amplitude of sin in
Our fellow mortals few of whom are blind.

Regarding Truth? Well, she in dishabille
Was undistinguished from our robeless ilk;
To mark a contrast Truth put on a frill,
A smock, a robe, and blossomed forth in silk.

Richly elaborate her gaudy train
Sweeps over everything in loud attire;
Truth's proper person still without a stain,
Her garments get bedabbled in the mire.

In proud habiliments the lady walks
On earth disguised, tho' Truth remains true; so
Invention merely human, writes and talks
In ornate language of her gay trousseau.

To recognize her now we certain laws lack
In cyphering her orbit 'neath the skies:
As well seek vanished needle in a strawstack
As make a quest of verity's disguise.

Not that Truth vanished from the earth, now note me,
Nor that sweet Charity in hiding lurks;
You may in your report, however, quote me
As dubbing them a brace of flirting shirks.

There is a dearth of truth and charity;
Comparison is coy to name the less—
Paul nominated one when vied some three,
Truth absent, greatest; greater now is Dress.

Involved in quandary are we for style
And errors unredressed, as each exposes
Her pristine character reversed; the while
Men marvel at the strange metempsychosis.

SONNET.

HERE is a rosebush, called the creeping rose,
To plant upon my dead boy's grave, that, by
And by, when Time permits myself to lie
Beside him in the thraldom of repose,
(Not sleeping, I mean dead) it may disclose
Rare bloom in friendly season. It will pry
Aside the weeds and grass to creep where I
Shall be—thus emulate my babe—and pose
Its rose-lips in an open laugh above
My heart of dust; and when the blossoms fall
In their telegraphy of noiseless love,
Some fond communication from my Paul
May thrill electric vines; or, failing, prove
That we are nothing, and Death all in all.

BATTLE FLAGS.

'TWAS Sumner said: "Our battle flags will wave
Unkindly memories of a broken dream."
Ay, broken by the crimson flowered grave
Dug in the tearful haste of brothers brave
Among the willows where in sadness lave
The murmuring waters of each southern stream.

Forget those battle flags? How hard 'twill be!
Their dauntless streaming led us up the height
Of burning hope and mountain, when the glee
Of laughing cannons mocked us, and the sea
Of flames had swept to dim eternity
Our mangled messmates fallen in the fight.

Let Southern chivalry give back the dead
  Who purchased with their blood the flags and field—
Return the flags because, forsooth, 'tis said
The union in a stronger Union wed
Is now perpetual? because we dread
  To stir disdain in bossoms forced to yield?

The heroes of Truth's conquests never die:
  So, if you will, these battle flags forget.
Let them return where southern breezes sigh,
The home of valor, seat of chivalry;
Forego the victor's boast, pass past things by—
  Thus start a nation's code of etiquette.

TWO MOTTOES.

LIFE: Heart to heart.
DEATH: Dust to dust.

BY theory and by proof it hath been shown
There is, or is not, a hereafter. Right!
Peace to the dead. I live and reckon none
Know how to cherish life's delight
As those who live for them
Who live; the rest is dim
To reason's searching light.

"If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave listen and be graver still,"
The Avon stoic wrote. Not so; we die,
And dust to dust; then heart to heart until.
"Eat, drink, be merry," taught the sage,
Corroborating Youth and Age
Cry, marry and amen! we will.

Let the grave silence us with dust to dust,
But bide the silence with a lover's part—
True, fervid and devoted; not in lust
Whose gaudy wing invites the venomed dart.
Love; 'tis the season, 'tis the bloom;
To-morrow dust falls, falls the doom;
To-day let heart beat nearer heart.

THE LOST PRAYER.

WHEN from our portal goes the well-tried friend
Whose way lies to the world of weal or woe,
Not knowing, we exclaim adieu! and send
The parting kiss by waving hand, and lo!
The prayer: Good by unto the end.

Good by? A benediction lost forever
To random tongues; a hurried, panting prayer
Condensed by quicker heartbeats which thus sever
On lips unlettered: God be with you where
You go, and God be with you ever.

At parting, then, may God be with you, dear;
And when the intervening distance more
Than sad words measure, you, perchance, get ear
Of God be wi' you,—till the voice dies low'r,—
God b' y'—good by epitomized you hear.

Good by! adieu! all one, we fondly try
To utter in our sorrows, in our tears;
Friends come, friends go; unceasing shadows ply
Their crafts about us in the flood of years,
Yet, in the surge or calm beyond—Good by!

CASSANDRA.

THERE to and fro upon the Trogan walls,
Like weird moon spectre of sublime distress,
The raving daughter of old Priam calls,
Hands wringing, teared amain, and every tress
Of her gnarled hair alive with writhing, less
Than hissing serpents being only hair,
Bewailing Ilium; the sorceress
Unheeded as a maddened damsel fair,
Her war-like brother Hector warning in despair.

"Foredoomed, foredoomed!" were her prophetic words
To draw the dauntless soldier from the field;
Her cry of evil omen sable birds
Of carrion in gloating echoes pealed,
But fell like Greek blows on his smitten shield
Beneath the force of warning; nay, they fed
His valor to the full so he would yield
Alone to death—and death attending shed
His canopy of darkness over Hector dead.

Wail, Hecuba; Andromache, bemoan
Fell ruin come apace; and over all
The fate of son and husband overthrown,
The doom of Troy's proud city soon to fall.
Cassandra's warning oft' equivocal
Established thus by slighting her appeals
Finds Hector's corse around the outer wall
Dragged shamefully, no ignominy feels
Bound to Achilles' ruthless chariot wheels.

O, fatal gift of prophesy, to cast
Before its full probation dire event
That none attends until the hour is past
When divination proves inconsequent!
Distraught Cassandra subtle in portent
By gods ordained, was furthermore received
As fool-capped prophetess by scoffers bent
On ridicule; they heard but not believed,
And as she raved the more the more themselves
deceived.

Upon the battlements of ages stands
The brain-sick girl of bodements making moan;
Words shrill with augury, hair-tearing hands,
Except when one above the pale brow thrown
Encornices the eyes, while things unknown
At longest range are scanned. Anon her sight
Discerns life's fray—wounds, blood; she hears the
groan
Of dying Nature!—Troy, Greece, Rome too slight
For death to catalogue in universal night.

EXPERIMENTS.

HOLD two soft hands in thine:
The heart's electric batteries go tingling
The fingertips with currents fine,
Enthralling as rich spells of wine,
And subtle threads of love will twine
Two souls together mingling.

Two lips join to thine own,
Her lips whose hands thus in experiment
Formed loving circuit: First, a moan
Or sigh, then panting—not alone
The secret heart its love has shown
In sadness or in merriment.

All signs are tattlers on
The lover's heart that, seemingly full well, ails;
A thousand mediums will run
With message quickly to the one
Fair creature under heaven's sun—
For love all things are tell-tales.

TOUTE A TOI.

HE DIED in Idaho. The clustered hair,
Entangled as in classical despair,
Twined round his pallid face full tenderly:
A miner welded in heart-passioned fire
Whose eager hope revealed was proud desire
To dig to hardpan, from which climb the higher
On golden ladder rarer man to be.

But he lay dead, this hero of my theme,
Pale as the glory of a faded dream;
His past was mystery, at best forlorn.
The fragments of a rose was all that he
Had on his person of biography,
'Neath which she wrote: "Toute a toi. MARIE"—
And under, he: "All withered—but the thorn."

Death is the moralist who stood above
These broken elements of dream and love,
Of hope, despair, and death let fly his dart.
Chasing the prismy threads of rainbow gold
This lover of unknown Marie had rolled
Away the secret mountain to unfold
A wealth of anguish pressing on his heart.

O what a scrap of history is here
Of him, of her, of tales that murmur near
The broken heart! All withered, all deceits;—
The rosy smiles, the pollened words and all
Those pledging petals that sweet hours recall—
All withered but the thorn, the prick, the gall,
The cynic monument o'er bitter-sweets.

A SMILING JUDGE.

"A MAN may smile and smile and be
A villain," Hamlet said, but fudge!
A man may smile and smile, you see
Beyond a doubt—and be a judge.

If ear to ear were full a mile,
His beard an intervening forest,
A thousand trips the judge's smile
Would make between, nor linger for rest.

The robe of Justice was believed
To clothe solemnity; and while her
Vibrating steelyards knaves relieved,
The judge should not become a smiler.

So, please the court, we here demur, or
Reserve exceptions to your smiles;
Appealing from the same as error
Unwarranted by Coke or Hiles.

Like sapient Ulpian be demure
Whose litigant all dupes surpasses;
Be doubtful, cautious, grave as your
Environment of solemn asses.

TO FATHER.

COMES May 'tis four and eighty years
The truant world has wandered
Among the outer circling spheres
Since first you, father, pondered
O'er life's realities;
And nearly forty-three of these
Since I amazed first sat
Upon your proudly dancing knees
Both, doubtless, wondering at
Life's possibilities.

Dare we go jaunting back together
  Without apparent fear
Through vanished calm and stormy weather
  Evading sigh or tear
    In memories?
How much of grief was sunflushed dew!
  The same eventful story
Upon the languid tongue; and, too,
  The same abundant glory
    Our hearts to please.

Your eyes turn toward the western sun
  Expecting it to set,
Life's varied mission nearly done—
  Not yet—gaze here, not yet!
    Let us remember.
There is some urgent need of staying
  Together longer, though
My crescent life is in the Maying
  And yours about the snow
    Of chill December.

Save you alone I never owned
One whom I dared call friend;
For such a lack have you atoned,
Mine fully to the end;
So ends the grieving.
How kind the world has been, withal, in
So many things to both!
Such good and ill have us befallen—
I am (are you not?) loth
To give up living.

Good turns and bad have been bestowed
Upon me unretarded,
And neither debt has long been owed,
The losses disregarded,
As well the gains.
Unworthy son am I to be
Owned by a sire so clever:
You never had an enemy,
While friends are bound forever
In golden chains.

An enemy you never had
Except one pseudo-friend;
As I remember you were mad
Predicting his sad end:
"Gollmima dang you!
If you will not my words attend—
(Wait till I cut this switch)
And your confounded conduct mend,
The tree is growing which
Will sometime hang you."

Let us together smile away
Those teapot tempests now,
Both praying that I ever may
Escape the strangling bough
For me by rights.
The picture's darkest background this
Which by no hocus pocus
Will dim the view that brighter is,
I standing in the focus—
Turn on red lights!

But, father dear, too long the cruise
To traverse rushing years,
Or wake fond memories with reviews
(Nor would they stifle tears)
Designed for laughter.
Most happy years reserved in store
Be yours still to enjoy,
Forgetting not that evermore
I'll be your old-time boy
Till both hearts stop and after.

SIR BUTTERFLY, Your radiant colors flash
Goldfoiled in thousand hues their shield-like guards
Defying me to question your trick wards
Of sunray fencing. I will bravely smash
Your froward person into dubious hash,
Reserve such fate to arrogance awards.
Peace is your mission? So! Exchange regards.
My choler was too sudden, always rash.
In peace or war I would a lesson learn:
Your gaudy tints bespeak the amorous knave,
Some gay Lothario on passions bent
Subduing lepidopteral hearts; you yearn
For sensual plunder? Liasons you have,
Confess them—Gone! Will ever rogues repent?

LINES TO ELDER B.

I THINK the World designed as round,
Is nearly so as orbs are found;
And that a ninny may propound
A deal of cavil
Which Solomon, howe'er profound,
Could not unravel.

You teach that hell is hissing hot,
A torrid climate heaven has not,
And purgatory mean, I wot,
For lying 'twixt them,
A temperature by sinners sought
As prelates mixed them.

You say that in the future life
Man will his own from neighbor's wife
Not know much better than this strife
Intensely human,
Where he may lip, as common fife,
The varied woman.

I would be certain; nay, a doubt
Will life's hereafter sadly rout;
A playhouse Zion make without
Grounds more specific;
For here the churches fight—and shout
"Let 's be pacific,"

Men are as honest as they may:
Lie, swindle, pilfer, cuckold, slay,
Seduce, confound, rob, slander, pray,
Malign and bicker;
If all these roads lead upward, they
Gain scaffolds quicker.

The world is growing better; yet,
The pauper, tramp and starved are met
By sleek philanthrophy whose fret
Is—"Will the press of it
Catch wind, my name sonorous get,
Or make a mess of it?"

With earth you are not satisfied,
Nor earthly methods, mixed and pied
So pilgrims cannot through them glide
In even course;
Were all corrections left you, I'd
Find matters worse.

With heaven I am not content
If what the churches say is in 't;
Let those who will their sins repent,
Despite small laughter,
A chance the gambler would not stint
To win hereafter.

As far as hell goes I admit
There is excuse for building it,
The earth holds many for it fit
Whose hearts now freeze.
Their names? if you insist, to-wit:—
Our enemies.

Thus, Elder, in these lines make out
What I believe, or wherein doubt:
You will discover me about
As bad as lawful;
I'm with you, Elder, if you shout—
O awful, awful!

If you, however, deem my verse
Deserving aggravated curse,
Hurl your anathema, or worse,
In words to suit you.
We must the same course take ahearse
But there I quit you.

CENTENNIAL HOPES.

I HOPE that in the treasury of Time
A golden fortune coined by Truth awaits
The full maturity and goodly prime
Of this young family of States
So they may richly age,
Grow wise and sage.

I hope that though all things must die in years,
This childhood of our States is augury
Of coming greatness free of guilt and tears;
That growth to fullest worth will see
This maiden truth increase,
In States is peace.

I hope these States will never more again
Like crocodiles make meals of dearest blood
On their own children; naught to wash the stain,
Not grief with rivers at the flood—
Deeds may, good deeds to those
Who live dead foes.

I hope the chime of freedom from the tower
Of Philadelphia will harmony
To struggling nations ring, no slaves, no power;
For thoughtful people must be free:
No dispensation gave
Heaven to enslave.

Four centuries has Switzerland progressed;
Her mythic Tell roams Alpine peaks
Unchained as mountain winds; she stands the test.
And yet, our boastful Union speaks
As if, though but begun,
The race were run.

States grow with men, men grow with new ideas
And these are sane and insane in us all;
May anarchy's allies, craze-varied, be as
Confined as madmen in the wall
Of speechless, coward skulls
Away from fools.

I hope disputes will never weapon draw,
For one poor life outweighs the honor gained
At pride's most senseless war: abide the law
In which, not blood, be heroes trained:
Then will these States long be
Completely free.

4 July 1876.

ÆSOP'S HARE.

A TIMID hare (and why creation took
Such care to implicate so coy a creature
With such a startling, nervous heart 's a feature
Of higher plans unsolved) ran by a brook.

Again this hare (because along its track
The frogs leaped from their grassy qua'ters
Upon the margin into glassy waters
In utter, abject fear) ran snorting back.

Thus back and forth (nor need one this affair
Prolong to guess the timid creature hovered
Along the bank because fear was discovered
In frogs) and to and fro ran rampant hare.

How much like man! (because 'tis his penchant
To run a blazer on each timid victim
Who winces at his booh! it would convict him
Of cowardice.) How very much like man!

Some men are hares (when they amid the bogs
Flee hounds in fear; or, bravely on the border
Of brooks flush startled frogs in wild disorder
And plunging fear.) Some men, alas! are frogs.

The hare was all surprise—(be not o'erpowered
By fear before a stand is made, because
A valiant blow may knock out big applause
Or flush the frog) to find a greater coward.

SWEET LIFE.

YOU SAW that dangling dead leaf dive
Beneath the grass, the sparrow fall
To swell the figures? Once alive,
Why dive or fall at all?

You saw, wind chased, yon blossom leap
Into the brook, which, running on,
Enlarges ocean ever neap—
No need to look—'tis gone!

O weary counting! guess the sum
Of sparrows fall'n, and hopes as well;
Arithmetic is grossly dumb,
No finite figures tell.

O transient, brooding, dreaming man!
Death is the certain thing he knows.
Life is the puzzle, sweeter than
Rich fragrance of the rose,

SUB ROSA

IF CRESSID will toy with a longing to play
with us,
Fondling to kiss and for favors disclose
Her enamoring charms that, in truth, get away
with us,
Frowning, caressing, by yea and by nay with us,
Let her rudeness or nudeness impassioning stay
with us
Under the rose.

Rebuke the unchivalrous rogue who will tell to us
Honors once plucked from the darlings he knows;
Such a braggart of secrets exposes a hell to us
Here in a paradise Satan would sell to us,—
For belike the like liasons frequently fell to us
Under the rose

Let triumps no matter what form they may hie with us,
Conquering passions, companions or foes,
Be estopped from proclaiming the prowess to die with us
Coaxing or hoaxing,—known others may vie with us,
Such frivolities should for eternity lie with us
Under the rose.

TRAITORS.

THAT CHEEK whose permeating flush
Darts lighting o'er the pallid face
Till one may trace
By dint of that quick blush
The poorly smothered thought,
Is traitor.

That tongue whose wily rambling o'er
The narrow path of truth, trips down
A checking frown,
Is, to the ruling power
Of love, hate, joy or woe
A traitor.

That eye whose bickering glances stray
Into the far-off trembling skies
To catechise,
Is, by its timd ray,
Unto the muffled speech
A traitor.

That man who slides within the groove
Cut by blind moralists of old,
Whose fell heirs scold
When thought and earth still move,
Is to God's ordained law,
A traitor.

VENUS *SANS* ADONIS.

WITH VENUS poets have indulged the fancy
In liberal moods to coach the sighing race;
Licentious amorists they are, all can see,
Who flirt with sacred, or profane the base,
Desires of hearts;
And all the arts
Of pen or chisel in outlining Venus,
The peerless beauty of the ages
Recorded in authentic pages,
Are but the croppings of the craze within us,
No matter whom their frenzies may applaud, till
For utmost love she poses as the model.

My chosen Venus burning at my heart
Of sacred flames of ultra love (because it
Is secret from the gossip's prying art
Which makes incarnate skeletons acloset)
Will be the burden
Of every word in
These licensed rhymes that strangly zigzag turn.
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"
Sang Keats, an urn to view 't; he
No sweeter ashes from his Grecian urn
Scattered upon his over-fertiled poesy:
Why Beauty's goddess left to her repose he?

Hers is a form subverting holy writ
Whose legend of the story of creation
Reverts to dust for origin unfit;
Such form compiled (despite asseveration
Before the flood)
Before the blood
With spirit coursed thro' rivers of her mold,
Dust had not been, musty
And classic Venus de
Medici, seafoam or in marble cold,
Beside her stands a yellow wreck in view, 'tis
A mass of maimed and timely broken beauties.

Red roses have been ravished for their tropes
To parallel the lips of painted woman;
That they will yield to her, I have high hopes,
A color warmer than was ever human.
A red red red,
Twice hued, thrice said
To equal the vermillion of her lips—
And after could I speak well,
Thrice red becomes unequal
To her lips' Tyrian rouge—the red sun dips
In ocean such a carnadine if clouds baptizing
Their garments can betray a thought worth prizing.

Her eyes! O commonplace of ogling poets,
Give way to hers! a blue blue black that gives
The violet hue.—Two blues make black, for know it's
A law of rhetoric two negatives
Affirm; so black
Of blues—alack!
Blue neither, yet not black her tranceful eyes
That dream awake, yet waking
Seem as if merely taking
Farewells of sleep. But let them in surprise
A query flash, or animated travel in
Excited ways the glance becomes a javelin.

The lily-white complexions in the mortar
Of happy dreams have been compounded oft',
And alabaster brows and all this sort are
Supremely cream, superbly white and soft:
The seashell pining
For seas defining
A color purer than its lining hints
At her full-bleached enamel—
Tho' this will truly trammel
The metaphor of pearly-creamy tints
Of her pink-white complexion—blooded petal
Of bleaching rose suggests it, but not yet all.

Her bosom is a labyrinth of love
Beyond the clue revealed by Ariadne;
Wise Solomon whose hillside sheep once strove
To bosom woman, harped a song to sadden; he
Original
Was, that is all.
There is no tangible equation given
To figure her attractive pair—
Warm, full, protruding, round, and, fair
As winnowed snow, or what some call snow driven,
Whatever that is,—but I find it stands a
Necessity to write another stanza

To shift the flimsy veil of rhyme aside
The coyest bosom to reveal here free
Of shielding drapery before denied
Its function of concealment. Say that the
Imprisoned breast
Is in a chest,—
A treasure box of wonders, cautioned to
Keep closed lest some Pandora open
The lids that close my hope in
('Tis said from hers all other blessings flew
Tho' by the gods bequeathed) for fear
Of dissipation to thin atmosphere.

If sounds were mellowed to the charming lyre
Manipulated by rare Orpheus,
With sea-beach chorus and a floral choir
All distanced to an echo for the use
Of ravished ears,
So one who hears
Enjoys a sense of perfume and of sound,
They would securely mirror
Her voice to nature nearer
Than sounding speech in verbal artist found;
So sweet it is, so charming in the total
Of slides, breaks, emphasis—no need to note all.

Now there you have her—pardon, I have, rather,
With wealth of love more ample than what fell in
The path of Paris who Troy of his father
Inflamed with firebrand of epic Helen.
Her heart I live in
Responsive given
In ways beyond the tell-tale pen; so full can
No worded meter measure
The ardent love we treasure
Since Mars took measurment of Mrs. Valcan:
Unlike the blacksmith's fate with love of Venus,
No Mars can mar the marvelous love between us.

HONESTY *NON EST.*

"AN honest man 's the noblest work of God,"
In christian fervor said the poet Pope;
Bob Ingersoll, the atheist, sans hope,
Seduced the words to make the line a bawd.

"An honest god 's the noblest work of man,"
Inversely runs the orator's late version;
And while the meaning suffers mean perversion,
The line in equal measure poets scan.

A caviling wag who in grim humor revels
Announces an amendment scarcely honest,
Whose new construction of the adjunct 's *non est*,
Or god or man, hence both the work of devils.

Well, who is right? Man's death, if one believes
The serpent story, is assigned to Satan;
And Moses says that God did man create, an
Ungrateful creature who strange gods conceives.

The quest is idle backward though we go:
The sun-scorned taper of Diogenes
Whose search-light efforts made frauds ill at ease,
Could never honest man in Athens show.

Reverting to the "honest" qualifier:
As well abide the coming light when we all
Within the baleful glare of crackling sheol,
May find an honest being by its fire.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT.

FOR you, my Nellie, were you older grown
To understand the wild words issuing
From lines like these, I should the gods invoke
With prayer and worded incense that they would
On you a fond parental gift bestow.
Upon my knee you asked some Yuletide toy
As Christmas present. Wrong the words. You should
Say, rather, "Christmas box"—and, in a week,
"A New Year's gift, from you." These were the terms
Of rarer learning in the olden days
When spells were wrought in Latin, fairies called

In classic incantation, devils banned
And banished by learned formulas of speech.
You shall be happy with a Christmas box:
Its value measure not with stingy rules
Of earth whose survey in full amplitude
Of reach our kindred measures out of homes—
Surveying pallid poverty untouched
While prodigal with diamonds, gauze and paint
Wealth stares meek Charity out of the way.
What will it be the promised Christmas box?
Dear daughter, were papa's delayed ship fraught
With golden dreams more opulent than tales
Embellished with Arabian device
When brains and lamps were scraped for palaces
Or gimcrack fortunes, he should name a gift
To beggar princesses and drive again
The lavish Arab to his splendid dreams.
Now shall I tell you of Pandora's box?
Pandora was the maiden first on earth,
She was of gods the all-endowed; they gave
Her every blessing benefitting man.

Within a box were closed the futite gifts;
While thus enclosed secure was happiness
To humankind. How deep the symbol here!
Our chiefest happiness is still concealed—
Our greatest good unknown. This is the Greek
Conception of the origin of ill.—
The Hebrew fable with its woman too
At apples straining, spying mysteries,
You may hereafter learn and how Eve's fruit
"Brought death into the world and all our woe."
The dear Pandora curious to know
The form of human happiness concealed
Within the box, against the edict giv'n,
Despite ukase of mighty Czars of high
Olympus, peeped into the box, alas!
And, though the lid was parted from the trunk
Not wider than your two sweet lips now part,
Out flew to heaven human happiness,
Out flew each gift of special providence,
Each heavenly token for earth's splendor given
By good designing gods who minister

To Jove since then nor after spared a boon
To curious mankind. Thus dowered she
Essayed a peep, nay, half a peep at gifts
Whose wings fanned air about Elysium
Before imprisonment; Pandora ope'd
The lid and out flew winged Charity,
Contentment, Wisdom, Friendship, Justice, Love,
Faith, Beauty, Purity, Joy, Loyalty,
Benevolence, Truth, Virtue, Wit and all—
Ay, every wing was whipping air to gain
The heavens never to return. The girl
Enthralled by wonderment inactive stood,
And spellbound by the blessings fled—the guests
Whose parting was unspeeded by their host,
Aroused at length rushed blindly to the box,
In panting haste closed down the luckless lid,
And, fortunately too, closed Hope within,
Hope slowest gift to beat its rainbow wings,
Hope longest here to tarry, Hope the last
Our dreams to quit, our bosoms to forsake,
For Hope was in the bottom of the box.

Pine not for vanished joys: the present bliss,
The hope retained, the pleasure held, the cheer
We now enjoy would suffer in exchange.
When years wing back to you their varied gifts
Of doubtful pleasures with their pains unseen,
Yon will have learned what poets say of Hope:
With gewgaw metaphors they dress her up,
Trope spangle her from ankle unto neck,
And robe her in hyperbole. Withal,
Her fascinating form unmillinered
By poesy to us comes best in rags.
Hope radiant with colors bends her bow
To arch the clouded future. Half my life
Is gone were Hope to write the figures, yet
Hope is enchantress gilding time to come
With hues entrancing that if I were you—
Or once again redated at your age,
A child of three, to tread the zigzag path
Of life once more—I should abandon Hope.
Who to the cradle would retrace his steps
By guiding Memory when Hope points on,

The pilgrim well assured there lies the grave
To-morrow or to-morrow or to-morrow?
Had not Pandora saved for us this Hope
Death would be the religion of the world
And Suicide its priestess. But no more
Of matter not pertaining to my gift.
Suppose to me the power were assigned
Of all the troops of vanished gifts to call
One back for you, which blessing would it be?
Who will approve my choice? Not Wisdom say
Benevolence is chosen, neither Wit
Nor Love if favor is allied to Truth,
Nor Virtue passing Virtue by; each gift
Rejected in the choice will jealous pout
And all arrayed for peevish commentary
Be critical as if a human heart
Supplied keen tongues with envy. Make a choice
Of Beauty e'en would I, for Beauty is
The sovereign ruler of the pulsing world;
The gift were Beauty could my choice prevail.
And what is Beauty? Abstract definition

Impoverishes the lexicon for words
To mean as much as Beauty's finger means.
A slighted youth revolving in his brain
Her outlines, vanishing in uttered breath
When speech defined, gave her this character:
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know."
Mere object lessons worldly heroes are
In vassalage of Beauty. They to touch
Her garment's hem have pawned imperial sway,
And tumbled kingdoms to be Beauty's slave;
For her a thousand Antonies have lost
Their thousand empires; and on her behalf
The sword carved history on marble piles,
The lyre was strung to tremble softer notes,
The pen in inspiration was immersed,
And for her smile hypnotic love was doomed.
A dowery of beauty would enslave
All hearts from peasant up to courtly king,
She is imperious, tyrannical.
The arrant wit, the social gay, the sage

Of cooler temper will engage their lives
In kindly act or homage meekly shown.
With beauty's gift you at your feet may look
On passionate and favor-craving love;
On wisdom clamoring for bonds of chains;
On wealth expostulating to be cast
With lavish hand where pleasure dare invite;
On statesmen subtle in deep policies
To win your approbation; on divines
Imploring from the dust again to be
Created in some form of worshipers;
On artists, scholars, warriors at your feet
Empleading recognition of their worth,
Acceptance of their tribute to your shrine.
This christmastide your gift from one whose love
Of you must hold unrivaled, would be such
A beauty shed upon you as must needs
Inspire the universe for bolder scheme
Of fresh invention, that the rose be dyed
Anew, the lily painted, and a spray
Of perfume cast upon the violet

To intimate how much these beauties lack
For faint comparison.
Your box would hold
The gift of Beauty flown were I empowered
To call the prisoner back; I happy, too,
So you were fairer than this winter moon
Pacing the promenade of ultra blue
Among her twinkling votaries of stars.

* * * * * * *

O Time, among your varied gifts to her,
Be liberal with sweets, be liberal
With thy abundant store of happy toys—
For easily are human beings pleased;
And if my child be asked to fathom grief,
To pulse the blood of anguish—rather let
The father swing her now, so pure, so chaste,
Into thy phantom arms in dim abyss
That he may contemplate her little life
There struggle to the doubtful dream of wings.

NARCISSUS flees his Echo, thereby dies
Her love and beauty to ethereal sound;
So doomed by Juno when her lord was found
Employing this deceiver with her trickeries.
Till spoken to fond Echo ne'er replies
But lingers mute, in silence firmly bound:
How doomed like woman's love! Till men pro-
pound
The sighing query she no echo sighs;
If boisterous, answered boisterously; or low,
Replying low; that harsh, then harsh is this;
What mood Narcissus in strange tones employs
His shadowed Echo's full responses show;
Love, equal love; hate, hate, and kiss for kiss;
Yet, men their echoes spurn, themselves the
cause!

M. ESTELLE G.

WHAT love has brought you I may never know,
Nor to your lips whose lips must linger long—
Lips that were mine and dearly long ago
By their confession kisses warm among.
If I could pray the orison would show
My deep contrition: I was in the wrong;
And pray your heart in love has won the ease
That mine accomplishes in miseries.

And, Stella, somewhere sometime you may read
This laggard exposition of a heart
Whose love has gone astray: my eyes had need
Of your interpretation of a part
Of one small word—what trifles trifles feed!
One extra flourish in the penman's art
Made me discern the jealous word, another,
When you had written tenderly of "mother."

"The setting of a great hope" (with the ring
Returned, these quoted words alone returned)
"Is like the setting of the sun," now bring
Regret, remorse by hasty conduct earned.
Be yours the sweets of love, mine all the sting;
Yours peace, mine pain; yours happiness, mine
learn'd
In woe profound be made to realize
That love so loth to blunder never dies.

ON A PAINTING.

NOTE yonder balcony by love entailed
Where Romeo departs from Juliet,
Her arms enchaining, pursed lips having failed
To more than whisper low: "O go not yet,
It is not yet near day!" The moon impaled
Upon the ivied tower deigns to set
Like Romeo but lingers. I am sorry very
The lark and not the nightingale sang tirra-lirra.

There you behold two rival geniuses
In their endeavor to accomplish art,
The poet and the painter; nothing less
Than marvelous both empires over heart
Controlled by supplemental memories.
Constrained are all t' espouse the poet's part,
Transcendent in domain, for most would fail
These colored spells to feel were there no tragic tale

See how the painted wind toys with the stairs
Of silken ropes down which the poet takes
The fervid Romeo to fortune's snares;
A nightcap frilled is all the painter makes
To prophesy the nurse's puffing cares;
You know she calls—hist! now the door she shakes;
The Copulets are up, the russet morn
Is robed, the nightingale forsakes the thorn!

This miracle of love the painter's brush
Has fastened there in spellbound witchery,
When death, destruction authorize a rush.
Go, Romeo, in silence; drown the sigh
Your kisses echo.—Juliet, girl, hush!
Let waving hand announce the sad goodby.
My oh! what raptures do these artists throw
About poor Juliet and her Romeo!

GUINEVERE'S LAMENT.

O WEARY as the pale morn-star
That wanders from the threshold of the night,
I'm lingering afar
Where heartmates come not nor
The trusted lips that are
The lover's fond delight!
How weary, weary, weary!
To live, or, die and rest,
O which were best!

More maudlin than the sea-made moan
That pines for Timon by the Attic wave
Is life's abandoned tone;
I in the world alone
Enlist no friend, have none
To cherish me or save!
Too weary, weary, weary!
If living be the best
Where, where is rest?

How weary are the hours, ah me!
Yet have I trusted—patiently I'll trust
The lover's coming, he
A wooer still must be—
I yielding too, till we
Lie dead both in the dust:
Still weary, weary, weary!
If dying were the best
Death gives not rest.

O mocking man, O scoffing dame!
Claim all the virtue that the saints have not;
Your hearts are passing tame
Not stirring at the name—
Love's glory and love's shame—
Of Lancelot, my Lancelot.
I'm weary, weary, weary
Of love denied its rest
Upon this lover's breast.

The shamed moon hides behind the sea,
And guilty stars in depths of azure languish
As shunning weary me
Whose heart was never free
Of love or misery,
Of pain or cruel anguish;
Still jealous and aweary—
Dost think Elaine hath sought
Again my Lancelot?

That smile, that cunning, knowing smile
Betrays his treachery.—I'll burst these walls
Of masonry and while
Their beads nuns tremble I'll
Tear-drown this granite pile
Till it a ruin falls.
Prayer-weary and heart-weary
Confined king-doomed I'll not
Abide from Lancelot!

Ho, there, unbar!—No answer bring
My panic words.—Unbar! what, ho! without!
Who comes? not Arthur, King?
Pass on, pass up; nay, wing
Your higher way, nor cling
To subtle, earthly doubt—
I'm guilty and aweary
Of king-love—in love's tilt he
Won Guinevere, the guilty.

Resounding walls, not Arthur, hear
My mad confession. Let them crack for shame
Or shrive me for the sphere
Of woe, or penance drear
Impose on Guinevere
To clear her slandered name
Who is aweary, weary
Of earth, air, night, nun, novice
Not being where her love is.

Coy moon, flirt with the sea;
And, quizzing stars, abide the coming light
When fuller, ampler equity
Adjusts the passions we
Endure with frailty:
Love's errors are love's right;
And I am weary, weary
For earth the heart to take
It only made to break.

Come, harp, we two may pine alone—
Nay, softer, softer—trillaby, how sad!
Trill, thrill, O dead the tone,
"Moan, moan," it murmurs, "moan"—
Ha! that a lover's groan
Is to my bosom known,
And my brain all but mad.
So weary, weary, weary:
To love in life's unrest
May be the best,—
It is the best.

STAR OF THE EAST.

STARS of the Night, give answer! You
Have lost the pagan sister of the Seven,
One Pleiad gone beyond the view,
Or buried in the stellar dust of heaven
Ne'er to return,
Whence pagans mourn,
But answer, when your flame is low
Will new light from the ashes glow?

Star of our faith, of Bethlehem,
Of Christ, the jewel of the eastern blue,
Bright for a night but after dim
In oriental waste to mortal view,
What is your sky
But immortality;
Your mem'ry but the light set in
Hope's window for the feet of sin?

Two stars are gone; yet, in the glow
  Of sinking, sunset years, Faith sits believing,
Ay, knowing—Faith presumes to know—
  That Christ's eternal star still undeceiving
    Will shine again,
    Forever reign
For wisemen. Fool, O fool-shut eyes!
Wayfarers seeing will be wise.

Star of the East, shine on forever;
  Tho' empires westward move and build below
The pillars of Atlantis, never
  Beyone the light of thee they go
    To joy, despond
    Never beyond.
Thy occult beams the mind will light
When death adjusts the shades of night.

DYEING THE ROSE.

ASCALAPUS who charged queen Proserpine
With eating seeds of the pomegranate, was,
Tho' true the allegation 'gainst hell's queen,
Turned to an owl for tattling 'gainst the laws.

Nor yet has he forgotten this fell trait,
This meddling owl and mocker of the moon;
He ruffed his tufts this night, I must relate,
Silence or sound to hoot, this night in June.

The nightingale on rosy favorites
'Gan chanting forth this amatory lay
Just as the moon relit her silver lights
Behind the argent shadows of the day:

"Sweet Philomel, awake
And list to me;
A carol thro' the vale
To cheer the moonbeams pale
May rouse the spellbound brake
To hear my praise of thee.

"My love earth must not hear,
My tears none view;
O Philomel, my Philomel,
List to the throbbing tale I tell,
Forever trust me, dear,
I give my heart"—"To hoo?"

This inquiry the wan owl thundered out
In accents void of music; and the vale
Reverberated it, called echoes shout
The accents harsh to silence down the dale.

And silence which is sexton of all sound
Returned from its grim mission where it laid
The owl's To-hoo to rest beneath the ground;
Thus, peace assured, the nightingale essayed:—

"O Philomela, though
The mocker knew
To whom my heart I gave,
For whom I pine or rave,
I'd have the blind world know

I gave my heart"—"To hoo!
False knave, to hoo?"

The ungrammatic owl by gods decreed
A speechifier most inopportune,
Alarmed the songster who showed Pan the reed,
That down the songster fell in pallid swoon.

But sound less argument or logic wise,
Was evermore perplexing. Sages spent
Much breath in sound, so did this bird in sighs
Proclaiming his last will and testament:

"I dye this rosebud red,
My love, for thee;
Its thorn let out life's flood
And forth drips pulsing blood
To dye the pale rose red
For love, my love for thee."

His Philomela listening sad beside
In unschooled treble blubbered from her bower
Of roses this sad requiem—she tried
To sing in tears, not angels have the power:

O bitter, woeful sight
For love to see!
Thro' all the weary years
Shall fall my widowed tears
Till they the rose wash white
For thee, my love"—"Te hee!"
The owl grew merry quite,
"Te hee, fond fool, tee hee!"

White rose of truth, and love's red rose still bloom
Despite the owl-cried slander all in vain;
Love dyed the one, and Truth's sweethearted boon
Of tears was shed to wash it white again.

Thus in the Persian vale Love testified
In dumb significants what after were
For hatred in the Temple Garden vied—
The rose of York, the rose of Lancaster.

NOT many years ago these swamps betrayed
Unwary travelers by their phantom light,
The ignis fatuus weak hearts to fright,
When pioneers within its precincts strayed.
Here in substantial edifice arrayed
This marvel to the all bewildered sight,
The gourd developed in a fairy night,
Consummate genius for new commerce made.
Hesperian dreams in furnace-flames were welded
To beat the orient; the magic wands
Swayed by idyllic artifice are felled, it
The nonpareil White City, greater stands.
O'er all the world in reverential awe go,
Then ponder on its miniature, Chicago.

JUNE.

YOU may, perhaps, some slight exception take—
Plead noisy fowl, or ague's burning suns,
To long days trivial objection make
Protesting to the languor which is June's.

Come all the months of nature's galaxy
For crown of honor June, dispel all fear,
In royal coronation will out-vie,
Imperial mistress of the crescent year.

Come all June days in sunlit robes of state,
My courtesy the regal Twenty-second
Distinguishes above its every mate,
Because in it my natal hour is reckoned.

It is a day replete with shining hours,
To darkness leaving little sway for crime;
A month of dreams and calm, of love and flowers,
The heir apparent of the Summer time.

Let biased eye in frenzy elsewhere gaze
At seeding months or fruitful, blizzard free,
At placid May, October's mellow haze;
My natal month is good enough for me.

THE POESY OF A RING.

O LITTLE Rose, my latest cheer,
My last—plead accidents in bar,
To-day your are of age—a year,
This tiny ring vouchsafe to wear.

Your hand; no, no—the left, this finger
Whose nerve describes the shortest line
From fingertip to heart where linger
In embryo love-buds of mine.

And how the parent seeds transplants
In such a tender soil you know
As well as I, but no one wants
To question what the winds may sow:

The harvest with the whirlwind comes
To garner all in after years
When hearts are ruined, wrecked the homes
In full propinquity of tears.

There, look! You smile, my tender one,
And laugh; so, that presages good:
You recognize what you have on,
Its mystic meaning understood.

A year of age and comprehend
This ring with endless circle bound?
Like fabled love without an end;
Like constancy in fancy found?

This circlet is, or Kepler's count errs,
Composed of infinite straight lines,
Three points of which no line encounters,
And thus to turning ay inclines

In protests of your fervid heart
With ring lore do not love annoint,
Lest it inconstant prove the art
Of varying from point to point.

Laugh and clap hands: Beanporridge hot!
No? lost in admirable joy,
Our merry game abandoned? what!
You are enchanted by the toy?

Wee tendril, twining Rose of mine,
On earth bejeweled first by me
May this our kindred hearts combine
From Adam to eternity!

A fairy finger bound in gold,—
This cap O is one-half the measure,
May million trillions manifold
Sweet Roses for the world to treasure.

As I now love you love your own,
The parents past, the offspring new;
What though the cradle be a moan
This heart would break for loss of you.

And sometime when the lover lips
This pretty hand for Hymen's potion,
His fondest vows may mine eclipse
But not exceed my heart's devotion.

So, little one, the ring admire,
And laughing flash it full to view:
To all the questions of your sire
He knows the answer is, "Ah! goo!"

A FELLOW TRAVELER.

JUST a moment on the bridge:
'Tis my resting place the dearest,
Naught to taunt save an odd midge;
Here the village is the clearest
Over yonder drooping ridge,
And the queerest.

Where the brooklet through the weeds
'Tween to files of hills comes humming,
Pipe the birds mid winded reeds,
Ever and forever trumming:
Much like good times or good deeds,—
Ever coming.

Close's mill continues drinking
This wild brooklet down below;
Of the whirling mill not thinking
Rushing bubbles onward go
Dashing, racing, splashing, blinking
To and fro.

Or, the rarest fairy tales
Uttered in the choicest diction
By the brooklet to the gales
You remember, and Old Nick's son
Who transformed the blabbing quail's
"More wheat" fiction?

Navy Close cried out, "more wheat!"
All the customers "more flour!"
While the turbine thought it meet
To demand more water power:
To a quail was turned the cheat,
Sings each hour.

Way beyond this ancient mill—
Sight across these water mallows—
Sleeps the village cold and still;
'Tis a bourn each being hallows
Heedless as the brook until
All it swallows.

Ah! my friend, you little know
What a journey I have taken
In this limping fashion slow—
Eighty past, if not mistaken,
Eighty, sir, last June—to go
There forsaken.

You this village know, no doubt;
Rest awhile, I know its people:
Mutes of eloquence devout,
Sufferers no more to weep ill—
Death would find their church without
Marble steeple.

Just beyond the brooklet sleep
Only friends whom Death would call, he
Harkens not to those who weep,
Nor the splash, skip, dash and sally
Which the brook makes while its sweep
Makes the valley.

Coach me, friend, let me move on,
Onward still tho' pace be creeping—
Nor has all my vigor gone
When there is no charge for keeping
Any mortal left alone
Yet not weeping.

Whither? yonder, well a day!
Round about but backward never;
O'er this brook lead palsied clay
To the graveyard where we sever
E'en farewell there I will say,
'T is forever.

PATHOLOGY OF TEARS.

EARL Neal, my son, then midway four and five,
Observed my awkward surgery afret
In once extracting from my finger—I've
Forgotten, thorn or sliver firmly set.

How deep his sympathy! With many "ohs!"
He gazed upon the progress fearing blood;
And frequent sighs from his pained bosom rose,
But never splinter came with ruddy flood.

His wide brown eyes, a perfect mirror wrought
Of deep reflection and philosophy,
Materialized his thoughts if ever thought
Were palpable to the espying eye.

I lost the thorn in study of his eyes,
A tranceful pair; brown as my mother's, than
My own a deeper shade—his I much prize
For this hereditary potent plan.

And viewing the affair as baffling me
He undiplomaed doctor as he was,
Codes disregarding in his practice, he
Unskilled in Galen and the statute laws

Protecting murder in a legal way—
(For so this quacking flock themselves protect,
Whose methods can no commoner gainsay
Because, forsooth, their parchments so elect;

Experimenting on the sick to death,
In league with sextons, patrons of the grave
Before and after we dispense with breath,
A race of ghouls no license law should save;

In pill projectiles hurled by college rules
They cannonade us with hot mercury;
For whims of medicine found training schools
To teach humanity new ways to die)—

Gave me his remedy oft' tested, oft'
Exemplified in his experience—
(Can learned doctor physic more?) in soft
And soothing words fraught with diviner sense.

Let Æsculapius take lessons here
And all his pupils, though they amplify
Emollient relief sans pain, sans fear,
None can improve Earl's surgery: "Pa, cry."

These were his words, such his prescription, this
The anodyne of pain: "Pa, cry." Tears may
Be idle as the poet's dream, but his
Were shed a thousand ailments to allay.

Tears were his case of instruments to cut
The rooted splinter, tears the antidote
Of every ill inflicting childhood, but
No tears were at command the thorn to rout.

O Earl, physician dear past mortal ken!
This was a sugared medicine to me,
A bath of suasive oil to thorns within
Of deeper import barbed with misery.

That fated moment (strange! will tears come now?)
We sat upon the threshold of a home
Whose walls were crumbling; ay, the broken vow,
A broken home, the broken dream had come.

The skeleton usurped the closet and
Peace fled for passions in wild anguish spoken;
Recriminations were in mad command,
A chaos reigned and thus the home was broken,

Curse her who nursed your lips that both have kissed
A thousand thousand times—the lump appears
Here in my throat, before my eyes a mist,—
Would I could cry! words come not, neither tears.

* * * * * * *

But after all when Time heaps over us
Grim mounds of sand, our Samson hair all shorn,
What need of heaven to adjust abuse?
No need of hell, Delilah's being born.

And after all what need of physic tears
To sympathize with self inflicted woe?
There comes a season in the wailing years
When thorns prick not and tears no longer flow.

And after all what need to fondle grief
As if a mistress cunning with soft wiles
To offer to the wounded heart relief,
Her lips a mocking pleasure, false her smiles.

Hot passions must apologize for leave
To found vague hells for one whose erring life
Burns its purgation here; cooled, they forgive
The unrepentant mother once a wife.

So after all when all is fully ended,
Both briefs before the high tribunal filed
Where arguments and palliations blend, it
May be that Justice will rest reconciled.

So, Time, benevolent with thorns, deny
Their access to the heart of Earl, our son;
Let no one deeper sink than what a sigh
May pluck and one tear usher to oblivion.

NIGHT in her wondrous arabesque of sky
Star jeweled and a loitering summer moon
Charmed of her errand tho' the maze of June,
Bend o'er this Court of Honor rapturously.
Man would with Boreal colors nature vie
In wizard art: the painted sprays enswoon
The senses charmed; deft gondolas splash by
Mingling strange airs with Sousa's lulling tune;
The mermaid-haunted fountain rivals all
In gush; white statues busy in their pose,
And every dome its lighted diamonds dons.
Here is my utmost dream, art magical!
Lest the enchantment vanish I must close
Each eye in turn, nor risk them both at once.

AN ARIZONA TOMB.

IN Arizona lies
A tomb
To which glad sunligh flies
But leaves in gloom;
In it a victim slumbers; nature sighs
Around it at his doom:
And when the moments paint the shading
Of twilight skies there come all daunted
Thoughts shuddering from chills pervading,
As if the tomb were haunted.

A frightend rill
Runs by
With noisy courage till
The sandplain nigh
Is safely gained, then mock-heroic will
Send back the coward sigh.
The coyotes move in troops along
The vale below with scarcer breath;
There hushed is every song-bird's song,
Mute crickets are as death.

The history? Alas!
A word—
Need it be written here? the glass!
Than which ne'er heard
Our race from lips pronouncing pass
One courted move, or blurred.
Still men are fools tho' drink be raging,
And men more raging heedless still,
Till wild contention such are waging
Brings ruin, sorrow, ill.

Some friend the clue
Gave me
Who thought hell's charms to woo
So potently
A reason furloughed spirits do
Repeat their rosary
If Lethe twice they wander over.
We must turn back a page unread
Tho' haunting spirits may so hover
Or not, above the dead.

Two beings met,
They loved:
Armand and Angelet—
How well 'twas proved!
The one a housling rose and pet
In famous beauty moved.
The other manly, handsome, winning,
But overshadowed by the ban
Of his love's sire, not for his sinning,
He was a perfect man.

Both to him sped
To get
This parent's blessings shed
Upon them, yet
Fear crossed them—they were wed,
This Armand, Angelet.
They knelt, confessed—but for the blessing
Received the father's wild anathema;
They rose heart-sore. Them sire addressing:
"Away!" quoth he—"but stay!"—

"You two are wed
By law?—
Would God had struck both dead,
Or I ne'er saw
Thee, Angelet, upon whose head
This curse alight to awe:
May thy hereafter know no leisure
From prayer and misery to the hearse!
And, Armand, thine be gall from pleasure,
Away! Hell grant my curse."

They drooped at this
And left,
Both facing lesser bliss
For hearts were cleft.
The scornful sire did at them hiss
Departing spirit chafed.
O Aramand, Angelef! O sorrow!
Would the next page had ne'er been written;
But turn to it, to the to-morrow
Of these two beings smitten.

The bride's blood froze;
Her cheek
Grew sterile for the rose,
It died; nor seek
Did she to voice her hidden woes,
So fashioned mild and meek.
Poor Armand saw her sadly wither;
His love, his fondling lost their charms
To woo her wasting figure hither
To his entwining arms.

He took to grief,
And then,
The glass. I shall be brief.—
Nights found him in
The gambling dens a roystering chief—
Chief by brevet, of men.
No home, no wife set him to thinking
Of ruin coming on apace;
By swaggering and braggart drinking
He ran the thorn-path race.

Thus on and on
Till woes
Came trooping not alone.
His cherished rose
With dual dearth was nearly gone—
Not quite, for she arose
From her lone couch and by it kneeling
Prayed: "O protect my Armand, God,
Arouse him to his fuller feeling
Protect my Armand, God!"

In Armand came
Unheard,
Sneaking in drunken shame,
Coy and absurd.
Hearing God coupled with his name
He paused to catch each word.
Stirred by the prayer he vowed to follow
Debauchery and crime no more!
No more in mires of sin to wallow,
By Angelet! he swore.

But hell within
Broke out;
His passion rose, a din
Whirling about
In frenzy, rioting in sin.
With one weird, maddened shout
He grasped her by the flowing tresses
Shrieking, "Madam, let you and God ne'er fret
For Armand," struck her—heaven bless us!
Lo, dead lay Angelet!

O he awoke
To see
The victim of his stroke
And misery!
Did hell or rum his soul provoke,
Or was it Armand free
In power and will who did the murder?
He, Armand—influence hypnotic
Thus to refute—and nothing further,
Despite claims idiotic.

Sweet Angelet
Lay dead
Just as her lips were set
On blessings wed
To Armand's name. Could he forget
What she and her mad sire said?
O prayer and misery! Your mission
Is being lengthened undiminished:
One galled by pleasure and perdition,
The other's prayer unfinished.

He left the room.
Upset
Lay chair, lamp, table, broom;
The couch afret
Was fumbled, but the crowning gloom
Was pale, dead Angelet.
He left the scene, but to him stealing
Came her unfinished prayer—she said:
"Protect my Ar—" there the appealing
Changed voices with the dead.

He fled the home,
And still
That prayer abrupt would come
His soul to thrill;
Where'er on earth would Armand roam
It must his night-ear fill.
Old Mexico forgot the murdered,
The cursing sire and Armand fled
From whom since then there was no word heard;
The law had called him dead.

Could he forget
The stain
Upon his fingers set?
Blood marked its Clan.
To hush the prayer of Angelet
He noised all pleas in vain;
For, ever like the echoes dying
That aye rebounding never die,
On burdened winds her voice came sighing—
"Protect him, God on high,

Protect my Ar—"
No more,
The voice was hushed afar:
But every hour
Again repeated—it would jar
Not silence passing o'er
So softly Armand heard, no other:
Sad as the syllables of doom,
Sweet as the vesper plaints a mother
Breaths o'er the mossy tomb.

He sought the mines
Far west;
For gold framed no designs—
Nay, rest, for rest.
Mid miners, gamblers, libertines
He was forlorn, unblest.
Gold glittered in his path unheeded;
He squandered it in charities,
'Twas not the panacea needed;
His heart was ill at ease.

Still came to him
That prayer:
His head would reel and swim,
His eyeballs glare.
His record of the world grew dim,
Remorse bleached white his hair:
For aye his sleepless hours heard stealing—
"Protect my Armand, God, protect
My Ar—" there ceased the fond appealing
Where he the pleading checked.

"O bitter woe,
O God,"
Poor Armand murmured low,
"Let me not plod
Earth evermore!" But they who sow
The winds reap whirlwinds. Odd,
"Let you and God ne'er fret for Armand,"
He rashly spoke in moments gone;
Thus reaped he tenfold whirlwinds' harm and
The fretful prayer went on.

A hermit's cell
He dug
Above the mountain dell
Where magic drug
Nor opiate could madness quell;
There death and life did tug
A clamorous and frenzied season,
Prolonging days and nights with ills,
Of hope bereft, endurance, reason—
A fright among the hills.

'Tis wrong to say
That time
Moons measure, for one day
Of lives sublime
In woe finds more sands fall'n than may
Nile's pyramid outclimb.—
He killed himself. Beside a river,
The Gila's Pedro, lies his tomb;
Above the mound the zephyrs shiver
With nightfall's chilling gloom.

The story goes
They meet
At sunset, but who knows?
Our wand'ring feet
Must halt before the tomb of woes,
Life's tragedy complete.
If love could leave the tomb to greet us,—
We all have love-tombs somewhere prized,—
Our doubts would find their own quietus
And death were analyzed.

"A madman's grave,"
The stone
Announces. Grass and wave
The legend moan
Where Gila's waters pitch and rave
For motives more unknown.
Some haunting kindred we hereafter
May dub the airs and hills and river;
For here they moan or shriek in laughter
Beside the grave forever.

One needs not kneel
In prayer
Deep reverence to feel:
The listful air
Trembles in sympathy with some appeal
Of sorrow richly rare;
And after comes incessant weeping
Dews nightly never there loan tears—
Till dusky shadows off go creeping
And rose-cheeked morn appears.

A city now adorns
The vale
Below, where cactus thorns
The tomb empale—
Appropriately Tombstone called—which warns
The tourist of this tale.
If fortune should your feet advise
On Arizona's sands to wander,
Approach the grave where Armand lies
And o'er his madness ponder:—

Our action brings
To eyes
And hearts beyond us, stings,
Joys, tears and sighs;
To innocence our evil clings
And there the moral lies.
Heirs may hereafter know no leisure
From prayer and misery to the hearse
Because we quaff the gall of pleasure,
Bequeathing but a curse.

In Arizona lies
The tomb
To which sad sunlight hies
To leave in gloom;
There nature squanders liberal sighs
To mollify the doom.
Let twilight's spirit count her beads
And finish her enchanted prayer
For Armand most his Angel needs
Where we must leave the pair.

A CYNIC'S TALE.

A MINISTER to China whose full name
Is cloaked in darkness by indifferent fame,
Among celestials sat at royal feast—
One emperor, moguls the rest at least;
Not being up on Chinese words, confound them!
Was down, of course, at jabber speech around him.
Without translation every dish he ate
Was strangely easy to amalgamate
With his American star-spangled blood,
Especially one dish seemed mighty good;
And scheming to induce the western cook
To introduce it later, undertook
To question at his elbow sallow Johng.
About this meat so famous in Hong Kong.
The gourmand soon resolved in his sly brain
The mode of speech that would the secret gain.

He turned upon the oriental dude
Wrapped in a miracle of magnitude,
Who graced the seat of honor at his right
With finger pointing to the mess in sight—
His sapient demeanor much enhanced
By elevated brows and chin advanced,
You could observe his vanity lean back
As he complacently inquired, "Quack, quack?"
None better knew than he it was no duck
But to dissolve a doubt this method took.
The shocked Celestial with a proud disdain
Curled lip and nostril in negation plain;
No ragged gamin on the street could jaw,
Disgust personified, more awful "naw!"
Then on our diplomat with scowling brow
Growled in canine vernacular, "Bow, wow!"
"Dog dast the Chinese!" thought the minister
When panic in his stomach 'gan to stir;
The amphitheater within his brain
Inclosed a combat fearful in its strain
In which the Will and Fancy tugged amain.

But in his stomach greater battle raged
Where dog chased duck an awful turmoil waged.
The Fancy proved victorious in the brain;
Below, the vanquished duck, was sadly slain.
His head revolved and then revolved his food
Till over China, ware and fare, he spewed.
Expelled the empire at next council, now
He snarls ki-yi, snaps, barks and bays bow wow!
An insane minister become crazed from it
His fancy dog-like runs to his own vomit.
The diplomat should be abandoned straight
Had not philosophers begun to prate
Against the wisdom of celestial diet
A morsel sweet however they deny it.
These vegetarians make feasts of reason,
Serve "dog eat dog" their pickeled wit for season;
Above board masticate infernal humors,
For vegetables pose as sturdy boomers;
Vitellus chide because he ate an ox
That ate their grass—upon them all a pox!
So mad I get at all their theoretics,

Their hygienic laws and shilly ethics,
In doubt embroiling every simple question
That patience dies and with it good digestion;
A note opposed to their vile dogmas you make,
Man 's not controlled by what pervades his stomach.
Some dupes there are who fancy that the bread
In Shakespeare's craw put Hamlet in his head;
And that, to amplify the thought profane,
In Rare Ben's stomach it had wrought the Dane.
A rose in any garden is inclined
Rare bloom and odor in the earth to find,
While by its side skunk-cabbage will, I think,
Absorb from rose-nursed soil its shocking stink.
To rose or weed the selfsame soil supplies
Conflicting odors, color color vies.
For reasons founded on this solemn fact
Their table conduct shows some brains half-cracked;
And one I now remember, an example
Of eaters who may prove a fair example,
Was Oscar Wilde, the poet, dude, or what not,
Who sat at meal an hour or more and got naught;

But on a flower feasted eye and nose
Till from the table hungerless he rose.
The waiter marveled, bill of fare declined,
While flowery Oscar tipped: "Thanks; I have dined."
Do you believe a meal of so much sentiment
Is worthy blistered hellroom—worth a cent, I meant?
No? Neither I. But what I first essayed
In mock-heroic couplets to dissuade,
An idea so popular of late,
Is, what we think proceeds from what we ate.
The minister, exception you may raise,
Who ate the dog now as a luneling bays;
Wilde Oscar to support the opposition
May too be cited from the superstition
Prevailing now atavic in its power,
Admitting he reverted to a flower.
Withal, environment is greater matter
Than diet, granting plenty to the latter.
Our dreams are shaded by our latest meal,
Angels or nighthags as the meats reveal.
So comes it that the supper has control

O'er pregnant matter of the sleeping soul.
And what pervades the stomach, odd exceptions,
Is but the chyle of fancy's own deceptions,
Or fowl or dog as man each likes or loathes
He tumbles into rhapsodies or oaths.
Meats as an influence have divers powers
Unsuited to the fop who dines on flowers;
These delicate for airy thoughts enhance
The azure flights peculiar to romance;
While those equip for earth the mail-clad thought
That for mankind and robust reason fought.
Serve Cleopatra hearts of turtle doves
When she would revel in ambrosial loves;
Within the ruby wine dissolve a jewel
When to her bosom's flame consigning fuel;
But if she would a sea fight win, then feed her
Substantial beef or pluck will supersede her;
Without this stronger diet, I repeat,
She will be food for asps or Cæsar's meat.
To verify this theory I appeal
To history for what its tales reveal.

The Indian is savage not because
His crown of feathers borrows eagle's claws,
Nor yet for reason of the wild deer food
That warms the current of his fiery blood;
This game predicament would be unlucky
In taming Boone, the hunter of Kentucky.
Hence, I aver, give ear to this you ought,
All kinds of meat will furnish food for thought.
Moreover, brains their tendril nerves send forth
To forage on material of worth
For thought-construction in the workshop head,
Rejecting, brainy builder, stones for bread.
In following this tale with close attention
You note no failure adverse views to mention;
Denying which approach the feast in revel,
Go as a glutton after to the devil.

CARDS.

Whist:

Life is a game of whist: from unseen sources
The cards are shuffled and the hands are dealt;
Yet no one can control them, for the forces
That act unseen are no less strongly felt.

—*Iornquill.*

WHIST, Ironquill, is merely an exotic
Quite unbecoming any loyal sport;
Americans appear unpatriotic
Who with our bluff game are not *en rapport*.

You know my meaning? Doubtful as to "*t*"
I asked a Frenchman, my good friend Broquet,
About pronouncing it or not, said he:
"In whist all things are silent—in a way."

Shoot voiceless whist! Life is a game of poker:
Men brag and bluff and win for having sand;
Despite the cards men who repine when broke err
The brilliant nerve outranks the master hand.

Let Ware seek honors of the courtly whist;
A bobtail deal me, or a pair of deuces—
Nay, worse—a measly kilter if you list,
And at life's showdown gamble who the goose is.

The Joker:

KING George the Third asked John Horne Tooke
A game of cards to play;
The wit in sarcasm humbly spoke
What time can not gainsay:
"My liege, your pardon I must crave,
I know not even King from knave."

Fortunes:

A PACK of cards, much like mankind,
We with these complications find:
In distribution of the parts
Observe clubs, diamonds, spades and hearts.
Wealth, diamonds: lucky they
Who either find along the way.

When coupled with a robust health
The world no equal has to wealth;
Although its owner be a vampire
He governs women, men and empire;
Ay, if a diamond, he at bay
Will through all hindrance cut his way.
To diamonds draw and play them well;
They'll beat the devil out of hell.
And some aver, what we repeat here,
They turn the head and bolts of Peter.
The sainted turnkey of the skies
Where Dives has to exercise
The lowly camel's strategy
Before the portals passes he.
Not to digress:—The needle's eye,
Through which the camel needs must hie,
A stone arched gate of low design
Was, not a needle superfine,
So loaded camels stooping crawled
Into Jerusalem rock walled.
Thus comes it that the rich man's soul

By stooping worms through any hole
Of upper Zion, as well might
Humped Dives or a Campbellite.
But to the subject let us back
Turn our attention. Take the pack—
Do me the kindness now to turn
A card for what there is to learn:
A club for war—a ready guess,
A bloody business none the less.
I do not claim the vision given
To seventh son of son No. VII,
Nor in the wiles of divination
Subvert my art to sink a nation;
But that calm country is the best
Which by the club is governed least.
The fates of countries we may find
Applies as well to human kind:
Who wields the arrant club to gain
Desired ends is half insane—
I should say wholly, were it wise
The wrath of warriors to despise.

Shun clubs: If you would win the day
Persuade, plead, argue, reason—nay,
Solicit, coax—or if the foe
Persistent hang, the point forego;
Rather submit to proud defeat
Than with a club the numskull beat.
Contention is the bane of ease,
Who would be happy must love peace:
Disputes breed war a blatant shame
To fire with blood a transient name,
And clubs add fuel to the flame.
Enough of clubs, indeed, too much
Has now been wasted on the butcher of the ages whose vile looks
("Grim visaged war" per other bard,
If one must here "speak by the card,")
Are all the histories of the books.
A card, please—Hearts, O loving hearts!
That will exhaust our rhyming arts.
The symbol is, precisely, love.
No hearts no love—remove your glove:

Is your hand warm, or cold is it?
The temperatures are opposite—
Cold hands imply warm hearts and *vice*
Versa, warm hands denote hearts icy.
You do not it believe? Nor I;
Warm hearts with warmth must hands supply.
But recollect my scheme is not
To fabricate the destined lot;
I read the card, announce the will
Ordaining what fate must fulfill;
And, therefore, must I here repeat
Traditions, follow in the feet
Of wandering ages, ycleped old,
Whose dogma is—hands warm, hearts cold.
However, I take liberty, 't
Is not a rule that holds with feet:
A being who has this cold member
Airs in her heart the shrill December.
June's face deceives by warmer smile,
Her foot betrays the heart the while.
Say that your wife soft sleep to mock

Her cold foot places where the shock
Electrifies the spinal column,
Then tell me, if you can be solemn
In serious words of logic's might,
Can such an iceberg's heart be right?
All this with cards has naught at all;
Yet, easy conversational
Excursions here in verse must voice
Our predilections forced by choice.
You turned a heart. Consider, then,
What signifies a heart to men;
With women poets all contend
It is the middle, prime and end,
Includes all parts, their be-all here,
Full sway therein their proper sphere;
And Byron held "It 's woman's whole
Existence," writing of some soul
Intensified by passions, we
Admit it in the maid Haidee.
A mooted question for the ermine
Judicially soon to determine—

The law's delay proverbial
Is grown, so courts would, sir, be all
Of twenty centuries at codes
And precedents and episodes
Out of the drift and current tide
Of law before they could decide
If men have hearts, and (please move nearer)—
Their lawful judgment would be error.
This serious dispute may well
Employ earth's parliaments to tell
On due inquiry, if there dwell
In bossoms male, a human heart
Whose love is something more than art.
Tell me at what it aims unless
Gross passions and huge selfishness:
Or candidly, unless half crazy,
Has man a heart? now, has he? has he?
You cannot answer. Who the devil
The mystery can then unravel?
You are upon my pen impaled;
Squirm not, a million others failed.

Believe me, what man calls his heart
Unsensitive is as a wart
Ridging the dermise of a toad
O'er which he in his dungcart rode.
Men love themselves, and for a season,
Divest themselves of cooler reason,
Imagining that state of thought
A stage of love which love is not.
They pawn for women all their wealth,
Lose honor, glory, virtue, health;
And when despeptic then would prove
Their stomach's pangs allied to love.
The Gypsy harlot of the Nile's
O'erflowing slum employed her wiles
In snaring Cæsar to her arms
Where Antony confessed her charms
With feasts and wines, with sighs and laughter;
In ribald slavery thereafter.
You may or may not call this passion,
Examples of the fervid trash on
The pages of seductive books:

We merely say, like love it looks.
And there was saintly Abelard,
A subject for enamored bard,
With Heloise his abbess flame,
To carve himself a splendid name;
Love-characters yet warmer none
Has bold imagination shown
In history or wild romance
Than these two lovers dear of France.
Hearts more devoted no one knows,
Not Juliet and Romeo's.
But how far fiction now grown dim
As history, embellished them
We cannot know. 'Tis idle breath
To say that twenty years in death
The fleshless arms of Heloise
Wide opened to emparadise
The lover late entombed. I must
Embalm this fiction with their dust;
Or brand the story—do not take
Exception to the slang—a fake.

A mad Italian once was known
For Laura wed to rhyme and moan;
But Petrarch is the laughing stock
Of wiser ages now that mock
His famous (undeserving fame)
Love-laureled sonnets and his name.
She was a married matron who
His sonnets nor his passion knew:
She had no need of poet suitor,
A husband's love she found to suit her;
Although I must confess that Laura
Possessed a faithful heart no more a
Component part of modern woman
Whose love for Juan proves her human.
Pet's love was simply figurative
Adorned by fancy's mood creative;
'Twas nothing (call me not unkind)
But love emotions in the mind.
Love in the head can never dwell—
Who can be wise and love, was well
Inquired into by Lord Bacon,

Or Mr. Shakespeare, if mistaken
The cryptograms that now so rave on
A whim to cheat the Bard of Avon.—
(And here I might devote a page
To settle this contentious rage,
But will not for the claim is silly—
Says Delver: "It is, will he, nil he,
He goes," the goodman Delver whom
To build unto the crack of doom
The mason, shipwright, carpenter
Most vainly rival. I concur;
He goes with me—or, rather, stays
The author of the "so-called plays.")
Love were we speaking of? not worse I
Conceive than Bacon's controversy.
Love must be found we said at start,
Not in the head but in the heart.
(A further license to digress
This opportunity affords:
For heads Lord Bacon stands, no less
Than Shakespeare with the heart accords.)

We speak of hearts: If men were wise
To scan this life with cloudless eyes,
They would a woman's love endeavor
To grapple to their hearts forever.
As for a man's love, we, alas!
Must do as he does, let it pass.
How easily may love depart
From burly man's mercurial heart!
Let his fair amorosa slip,
Or woo a stranger to her lip;
Be caught romancing with a friend,
And all his love is at an end.
But her devotion truly won
Makes her a martyr to the one;
Crime-tarnished, sinful, ever he
Rests safe in her idolatry.
So cherish hearts. A law there is
To find out true affinities;
A yearning precept here I write:
Beware of love impelled at sight.
Another is of kindred force:

Quick weddings bring as quick divorce.
These do not warrant dilatory
Proceedings in the lover's story;
For nothing under starlit skies
Is so distressing as dumb sighs.
If you would play the game of hearts
By nature tutored, Ovid's arts,
Or other learned formulas—
Woo like a king and win the loss;
As Dryden intimated where
He feasts the Greek heroic pair,
"None but the brave deserve the fair."
Enough of love, of hearts enough,
No more of amatory stuff—
Mere vapor of the bossom blown
To nothingness when all is known.
The last card turn: A spade! well said,
The last to linger with us dead.
Spades signify the curse of sin,
Toil, dreary toil, the crossboned grin;
The sweating doom of Adam curs'd,

For toil and death were spades made first.
Shun toil, shun death, shun spades, shun sweat,
May admonition is a threat;
For lives are saddest that with these
Their trifling hours rob of ease.
Spades, spades! Do you not comprehend
A dreary, hissing, double end
Of sibilants in that sad word,
The deadest ever mortal heard?
Spades—toil, tears, sweat: there is the hell
Of which the church is wont to tell;
Destruction, death are in the term—
A trench of fate without a berme.
Spades, spades! avoid the gloomy spades
Till death envelops you in shades.
Now night approaches, death's forerunner,
With monster appetite that sooner
Or later (lay the dollar, please,
There on my book) we must appease;
An appetite we all must cloy
When spades and earth enshroud the joy

Of life, love, war, wealth, toil and tears—
The period of blooming years;
Death stops us all, the heart-beat too,
The heartache—true all have it, true!
The final, ultimate collapse
Of this organic force, perhaps—
And all life's purpose dare to fine us
For breathing friend, and so the finis.—
Where did you place the filthy stuff?
O here it is.—Of spades enough,
Distress and tears; avoid them, friend,
They come at last, and there an end.

EDITH.

THERE is outside the train a mourner too,
Beyond the sable obsequies that move
In funeral line. Hearts are as warm, as true,
Tears are as burning, love more likely love,
Affections touched and tendered by one who
Could not amid the group her feelings prove.
The tomb is now your home? To it I turn
In thoughts, till flowers bloom, and talk and mourn.

Who can preceive a flower is mine or theirs?
None will uproot it, for the neighboring pod
Perchance there bursting cast it,—or the airs
Of summer-land. And if the friendly sod
Do bravely for our flower that declares
Our sisterlove immortal as the God
Who made us sisters, and yourself unlearned
In hate, I'll deem my love you have not spurned.

You were the last to kiss me of them all;
O dead lips, think of this tho' foes beguile
Its tenderness! You were the first to call
A welcome at the door, the last to smile
And clap the hand at parting; 'mid the gall,
The bitter, so much honey-sweet; and while
Thoughts hold I shall not this forget
In kindly Edith, my sweet sister yet.

Tears now, and a cold grave, but after, Spring!
Then to the tiny mound,—Magic and Life!
Up come the flowers, you sent them up, to bring
Me sympathy. Each petal deemed a leaf,
Each flower a written letter answering
My flower of rhyme, thus hearing even deaf,
Speaking yet dumb. O run, tears, run, slow hours,
Unto the Spring, unto the time of flowers!

THE RED, RED WEST.

Give me no home
'Neath the pale, pink dome
  Of European skies—
No cot for me
By the salmon sea
  That far to the southward lies:
But away out west
I would build my nest
  On top of a carmine hill,
Where I can paint
Without restraint
  Creation redder still.

—*Eugene Field.*

Correct, my 'Gene,
Is your whim, I ween,
  Regarding our red West—
Where the lurid hues
Are the sanguine views
  Men hold till one cannot rest;
You may paint our head,
E'en creation red—
  Those red still a redder glow;
But pass one law,
A good old saw,
  And let the white horse go.

INEZ' SONG.

(FROM KING'S TOYS.)

ONE prayer—(frustrated chords, sing low,
Low as my heart, guitar.)
Convey to Captain Lover,
A soldier and a rover,
If love be pain, love go—no, no!
(A jar, o'erlook the jealous jar.)
Love, go not; no, no, no.

O mellow murmurs to him say,
Low as a maiden kiss,
That if love go aflowering
He dare not be o'erpowering,
Then guilty flee away—nay, nay!
(O serpent strings, you hiss.)
Love never flees; nay, nay.

TO A SKULL.

A STORY, Yorick, Dweller of the Cliff,
Whose tongueless skull is hollow as the grave,
A story of thy being let us have.
Say, seeing you are purely human, if
From Adam's loins, or gotten of a chief
Whose paradise was this ill-favored cave;
How lived, how perished? You were never brave,
Rock-hedged impregnably as Teneriffe:
Some vague protectionist with narrow views
To shut out progress; some crazed populist
Who stored his grain lest millionaires would grow;
Some chimney-corner wit.—Leave you no clues?
No histories nor autographs exist;
"Alas, poor Yorick!" you I cannot know.

TO PROF. W. H. WYNN.

HOW long will pens be silent with their fate?
In private study thrilled? It is not meet
Behind the door to quaff this water, stolen-sweet,
Intoxicating as the draught is; wait
No longnr to be reckoned poet great,
Fearing some measure stagger on its feet;
Publish your rhymes and let the critic greet
With smile or frown. Long years can not abate—
(For two and twenty years the same, in truth,
The wide-eyed boy admiring rhymes you wrought)
The love I felt for them, the love for you
And them I feel, a love begun when youth
Looked up to lips mellifluent and thought
The bees must find their later Plato too.

FRIEND, say of me if I should ever die—
For death is problematical at best,
Because anticipated by analogy
Of logic's supple weapons deemed the least:—
"There lies a fellow who imagined he
Was born to live; and, rather curious!
Did live his life both fast and furious
Through some odd years or mayhap even,
Without a thought of hell or heaven,
And doubtful of the end or immortality.
He was a complicated mess of dust—
Good bad, indifferent in more than one way;
And now the grave her mantle must
Throw over all that here remains of Conway."

THE SONNET.

WRITE fourteen lines distributing the rhyme
As fancy's unconventional taste please,—
A common pretext may be found in these,
And follow octave with repeating chime
In sestet as an echo marked in time:
Return, recede, diminish, till they cease—
Exemplifying waves of rhapsodies,
But pause, if possible, with this line I'm
Unable to control. I did not cite
The rule, ten syllables compose each verse;
Involve the sense so Bacon could not con it;
Convey one thought, one only, though you write
One hundred forty words such to rehearse—
And there you have contrived the famous sonnet.

THE SUICIDE.

WHO can with mental plummet sound the deep,
Sufficient wave of agonizing care
That with the energy of mad despair
Stirred thy sore bosom so to woo death's sleep,
O sorry suicide? Life cannot heap
Its surging griefs so high, or bleach the hair
With faded hopes as to make heroes dare
Into the mystic future thus to peep.
And yet thou wast heroic, must have been,
To die by thine own hand so skillfully;
In time alone harmonious with death,
The action prompt—dramatic, save in scene,
The ox and ass solicited to sigh
At, moribund barnstormer, thy last breath.

THE POET.

A BEAM of light hurled pell mell by the sun
Thro' utter darkness seeks its illstarred way,
Blind mole of space, without a glimmered ray
To light the visored tale its fancy spun,
In utmost void a suicide mad run,—
Unless, perchance, some rambling world, that may
Possess congenial atmosphere, delay
Its course a burning moment, then is done.
So runs the poet his own soul illumed
By fires internal, darkness to famed eyes,
Save when athwart responsive medium
He dazzling into splendor, all consumed
In passions brilliant for the moment, dies;
Merged thus all eloquent, avoiding dum.

Truth alone is beauty.

—*Plato.*

WITHIN the intellect all beauty lies
Of form or substance, attribute or deed;
As who can say this is a flower or weed
From wealth of odorous colors, if the eyes
Of nosing analyst could not apprise [feed
The chambered judgment—whom five sumpters
Of all they forage in the garnered mead,—
Of vague suggestions bookish earth supplies.
No annotations on the margins penned
Convey the groupings pleasure would exact;
No variorum comment on the plan
Whose ultimate rejoicing is the end
Where fancy rambling deeper than the fact
Sees truth alone as beautiful in man.

SEA FOAM.

The following fragment is from SEA FOAM, *canto I, a poem conducted years ago as far as three cantos, but unfinished. This much is inserted here in order to finish a sixteenth folder. Captain Kidd is hero of the poem, Rosa his mistress, and Inez their daughter. The scene is Havana.*

XLIX.

THE evening revelry was therefore ended,
And late delaying footsteps homeward strolled
From Almo's mansion. Night and silence blended;
The pulsing seabreeze, weary grown and cold,
The circled verge with Hesperus descended
To cool the hot sun boiling molten gold
Behind the sea. All were prepared for rest
Save Inez whom her maids for slumber dressed.

L.

They left her; and their absence was relief.
About her anxious lips one could descry
The twitchings of a melancholy grief
That unappeased stole forth a stifled sigh;
And on the sudden her whole frame, a leaf
Or harpstring filliped, trembled; by and by
She grew herself, and on the couch reclining
Resolved by sleep to end her vague divining.

LI.

She could not slumber. Where the moonbeams' flare
Flecked patches thro' a casement rich in art,
By parted curtains screened, half languid, bare,

She lay within her careless robes apart,
Dreaming of her Francisco, she the fair
Ophelia to the Hamlet of his heart;
Invoking dreams reclined she sighing, weeping,
While thievish moonbeams stole about her peeping.

LII.

Love languishing she rose again; her head
Soft pillowed erst, longed for a fondling palm.
"O night's somnific spell, O love!" she said,
"If I like this hushed world could be acalm!"
Then all above the window casing laid
Her arms and shoulders for night's mellow balm,
While her sad breast moon-charmed as the sea
In rolling billows heaved from wind to lee.

LIII.

O could they see her eyes star-gazing then
While in the pathos of a languid stare,
It would emblazon on the hearts of men
A spiritual look divinely fair. [when
Fringed lids trailed from bowed brows, as curtains
From arches trailing; her lips parted were

Like opening poppies drowsy in the morning
With dewdrops in their folds as teeth adorning.

LIV.

Her cheeks submerged annotto with the hue
Of fading roses; and her dangling hair
In disconnected clusters, brought to view
By most provoking gusts of wooing air,
About her dangled, yet oft' back she threw
The veiling tresses streaming everywhere;
But of her eyes—'twould be no great surprise
If every stanza told about her eyes.

LV.

There is a lurking telltale ever haunts
The region of the eyes. When any soul
Is charged with feeling the tongue taunts
Expectant ears, conversing eyes control
The wires of electric glances, slants
Unutterable things and speaks a language whole;
The rhetoric* of eyes with bards is hoary,
But hers discoursed in wondrous oratory.

---

*SHAKESPEARE: Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye—
SHIRLEY: Thy eyes express some rhetoric.

LVI.

Indeed she is the beauty of the south,
Fresh as her blossoms, as her springtide mild,
And dark of eye as night. Her kiss-fond mouth
Would turn the lips and bow of Eros wild;
I'll dye the lily if you paint her youth,
I'll drape her bosom amorously piled,
Protruding in fond mischief, if you free
Her rhythmic step upbraiding harmony.

LVII.

There on the casement leaning lone as night
And watched by the rude eyes of sensual stars,
The lovely Inez dreamed. These dreams one night
Call abstract moonshine, true love's shilly cares,
Perplexing dreams: she merely had a sight
Of her Francisco. In her witching snares
Some potent rival caught him with weird shyness—
When all unwarned she heard his whispered "Inez."

LVIII.

The daring sound alarmed her. She withdrew
Her shapely shoulders; round her naked knees
And breast exposed she drew her robes in awe;

With cautions fear she peered into the trees—
O grand delight! she her Francisco saw.
They whispered words impalpable—the breeze
Was up and noisy,—but I saw him climb
Up to her window in a moment's time.

LIX.

O veil your blushing faces, virgins chaste,
Whose cold, thin lips have never met a kiss;
And, startled matrons, hide your eyes in haste
If you deem Inez has preformed amiss;
She in this dishabille shocks ultra taste
Of some who urge good breeding, true it is;
But I am of opinion, say hers are ill,
That morals and not rags are best apparel.

LX.

They kissed,—Inez, Francisco—'tis no fancy,
For lovers in such thralling moods seek bliss;
I never could, nor do believe I can, see
More eloquence in lips than when they kiss;
There 's no deception in its necromancy—
Who kiss must love (off, Judas! that's not this.)

I love a kiss, prudes call it freedom; never!
'Tis bondage, for a kiss enthralls forever.

LXI.

In strong embrace of lock-linked arms entwining
These pure exponents of love's happiness
Sat heart to heart and cheek to cheek inclining,
Fond as two souls can be in such excess
Of love; both tranquil, for no undermining
Rival was watching near to mar their bliss—
Tho' love is deeper set by difficulties,
From our conservatories we may all cull this.

LXII.

A certain king* in painting, done by Ingres,
For the amusement of his children played
Horse on his hands and knees—nor would it injure
High dignity;—thus sportive all arrayed
Came an ambassador of pride to linger
In face-lit wonder at the figure made.
The flunkey would die first than do so, rather;
The monarch laughed, "O wait till you're a father!"

*Henry IV of France, the famous Henry of Navarre.

You mock true lovers, probably, when they
Are billing, cooing, squandering so many
Rapt hours, soft speech, deep kisses in dismay?
Then guy no more, 'tis idle; for if any
Convenient season come you cannot play
Both Jupiter and Cupid; near some canny
And wistful maid all must to love uncover—
Dissenting rogue, O wait till you're a lover!

LXIV.

They sat upon the window fond as love
When painted in a picture, and so near
Together that one moonbeam from above
Was crushed to death between them; not a fear
Had they but every dream their fancies wove
In curtains veiling each approaching year
Would outline heart's ease, make one sunny clime
To gild their castle in the realm of time.

LXV.

There was religion in their chaste embrace
Out-tonguing any moral argument;
For, though a careless robe her form did grace,

Or snugly clasp her yielding, fair extent,
Francisco idolized her rarest face
With fondest eyes and lips all negligent,
Parted when kissed, and kissed in parting, heart
Close up to lips that never meant to part.

LXVII.

The low moon's streamers sloping down the sky
Cast silver mantles half about the twain;
It was the moment when they planned to fly
From friend, foe, Cuba to the sun-kissed Spain
Whose ship upon the shore weighed anchor nigh.
The scene was changed to action. In a train
Of ample silks enrobed she few tears shed,
Then with Francisco to the waters fled.

LXVIII.

We leave them for awhile upon the sea.
Old Neptune, keep your storming furies low;
And, rugged ship, rock gently, tenderly
When swaying with the billows to and fro.
My drowsy reader, you would better be
In bed—go to your prayers and couch * * *

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 018 602 728 0